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ABSTRACT

This speech reviews the cooperative effort of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Division of Education and the educational branches of the Armed Forces. Emphasis is placed on steps facilitating educational progress within the services. These issues concern transferability of service credits, accreditation of service educational institution programs, development of a broader range of external degree programs designed to meet the needs of the career military program, development of model legislation, and availability of new and generous student aid programs. (MJM)

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# ALLIANCE FOR EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS*

By S. P. Marland, Jr.
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There are a number of deep-running currents of change coursing through education at this moment in history, alterations that we as educators must keep in mind as we try to discharge our responsibilities with reasonably good effect, whether we function as military or civilian educators.

The materials we teach are changing to keep pace with the explosion of knowledge, the buildings we use are different, the administrative structures of all educational organizations and institutions are undergoing deep alteration, and the desires of our clientele are themselves changing in ways that impact strongly on the entire educational enterprise.

But as I stepped before this particular audience made up primarily of educators of the Armed Forces, I felt that perhaps the most radical and far-reaching shift now taking place in education in this country is, in the simplest term, its universality of purpose. It is, it seems, at long last becoming one with itself, yet filled with appropriate diversity. Whether prompted by an increasing maturity in our profession, or by mutual interdependence, or some other force, the academician, the technician, the vocational instructor, the philosophy professor finally are beginning to realize that they serve in common cause, a cause large enough to embrace every man and woman engaged in this business --- including, of course, those who educate in the Armed

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Forces.

In announcing my perception of this phenomenon, I readily concede that I am also doing my dammedest to help it along, to do what I can to help end the destructive traditional divisions within the house of education. Since assuming the post of Commissioner of Education about two years ago, I have concentrated in particular on breaking down the partition between vocational education and the liberal arts, seeking instead a fruitful union of the two under the general rubric of career education. And I fully intend in my new position as Assistant Secretary to continue to push for the development, recognition, and spread of this concept, with strong encouragement from our professional community.

Furthermore, as chairman of the Federal Interagency Committee on Education, I plan to seek greater coordination among the 26 member agencies involved in education. The Department of Defense is a charter member and has been a major contributor to FICE. I am therefore keenly aware of the significant educational achievements attributable to DOD and the service agencies.

Within the Education Division of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare we are turning our attention with equal conviction and, I hope, with equal effect, to this matter of the division between the civilian education establishment --- of which I am a member --- and the military education establishment --- of which I have fond, but quite ancient recollections. I recognize that closing this gap has a special bearing on the future of the armed services, with obvious implications for the all-volunteer force that will become reality next summer. I comprehend your philosophy and design to develop service education programs of such quality and effectiveness

as to attract the kind of intelligent, ambitious volunteers you naturally will be seeking.

I sympathize with this desire. No intelligent person can deny the need for a strong, capable, intelligent, articulate armed force --- and I strongly favor building the kind of service education that will help make that possible. For we know that your share of the ablest men and women will be attracted to the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines primarily by sound education, first-rate skills training, and the opportunity for earning education credits that will be honored not only in the service but throughout the entire community of education --- and I pledge all the help I can muster to bring this about. I will speak more of those measures in a moment.

But if you will permit me, I would like to take a longer view of service education than perhaps the one you would logically take, the view that it is important to attract promising volunteers and provide for their preparation as effective military personnel. I go along with this, naturally; but looking at the entire educational picture in the United States as a whole, and particularly at the hundreds of thousands of young men and women that the regular educational establishment has been unable to educate or to train effectively, then I must say that we in the civilian sector need your help in the military sector --- as increasingly strong and increasingly equal partners in our great and fundamental task.

The eminent black educator, Kenneth Clark, has commented, "The Defense Department has been quietly effective in educating some of the casualties of our present public schools. It is hereby suggested that they now go into the business of repairing hundreds of thousands of these human casualties with affirmation rather than apology."

I think Professor Clark is saying that you are an alternative system, capable of doing things that the conventional system has not done --- especially with underachievers. I agree with his view and I would like to describe to you what we are attempting within the Office of Education and, potentially at least, the new National Institute of Education, to help the Armed Forces to continue and expand their excellent work of teaching --- affirmatively, unapologetically, and effectively. Most of OE's service-related programs, thus far, are directed to the benefit of those who have served honorably in the Armed Forces and have been discharged back to civilian life. But first I would like to describe steps we are taking to facilitate educational progress within the services themselves.

With regard to the important issue of the transferability of service education credits, we have been working on a number of fronts to assist the serviceman. The Federal Interagency Committee on Education --- primarily at the request of DOD --- is working with the American Council on Education and other academic organizations to achieve a more rational credit transfer policy for servicemen and other respectable transfer students.

Through OE's Bureau of Higher Education, we are working to encourage recognized accrediting agencies to be receptive to the idea of accrediting service educational institutions' programs, recognizing that with accredited status, graduates will be able to market their educational experience much more readily in the civilian sector. As you may know, the Commissioner of Education has a legal mandate to grant recognition to accrediting agencies he deems to be reliable. This affords OE the opportunity to persuade these agencies to listen and be receptive to legitimate Federal interests such as bringing into the mainstream of

American education a variety of schools that have been left out in the past, including military occupational schools.

These schools obviously have important implications for nationwide improvement of occupational training, an important component of the career education concept. The Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines have produced a whole range of very sophisticated educational programs, and we see the need for transfer credits from these schools to be accepted by junior and community colleges, technical institutes, and four-year institutions as well. Two accrediting agencies thus far have responded most readily to our urging. First is the Commission on Occupational Education Institutions of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in Atlanta, the regional accrediting agency for the 11-State area from Virginia to Texas. COEI has recently accredited four Air Force specialized occupational schools and is investigating additional possibilities.

We have also had a positive response from the Council on Medical Education of the American Medical Association which has approved quite a sizeable number of the allied health training programs conducted by the various services.

Accreditation is important to the career military person on two counts.

First, the military is as credential-oriented as the civilian sector, recognizing that employers as well as educators rightly or wrongly place a great deal of stock in accredited status for an educational program. Second, accreditation is extremely important to the man or woman leaving the service. However long the period of service, the veteran will presumably still be looking for an extended career in civilian life whenever he or she gets out. Educational experience with

an accredited stamp will, of ccurse, enable the veteran to compete more successfully for a civilian job. In some cases, the health field for example, it will also enable the veteran to sit for licensure examinations since it is typical among the States to require that only graduates of an accredited school be permitted to sit for such an exam.

We consider the cooperation of the Council on Medical Education of particular importance since the whole allied health field is in a state of rapidly expansive flux, with groups forming within groups to produce more and more specialized paramedical professions such as medical assistant, medical technician, medical technologist, physical therapist, radiologic technologist, inhalation therapist --- and on and on. The horizon in the health field alone appears to be limitless, with in the neighborhood of 250 professional specialty areas either emerged, emerging, or predicted to emerge. Obviously, many of these positions can be filled by individuals with service training as corpsmen or paramedics where, in the past, men and women trained by the military in the health fields would very likely have been deflected from a career in these specialties because their training was not recognized in the civilian credentialling strongholds. Here, again, you see you are an alternative system in the career education concept.

Closely allied to our efforts in accreditation is the involvement of the Office of Education in a cooperative effort with the Department of Defense, the Veterans Administration, and the American Council on Education in preparing a guide for junior and community college registrars and admissions officers to use in determining credit which they might consider granting to veteran students and military personnel on active duty who enroll at their institutions.

The American Council on Education has been helping educational institutions judge the value of service education for more than 25 years, and

although no statistics have been maintained with regard to the amount of credit which veterans of World War II and the Korean conflict received for their military education, it has been estimated that more than 90 percent of those who returned to college received some credit based upon the recommendations of the Council's Commission on Accreditation. The educational experiences included completion of formal service school training programs, United States Armed Forces Institute courses, basic and recruit training as well as knowledge demonstrated on the college-level GED tests and the general examinations of the College Level Examination program.

But this effort has been directed principally toward those seeking the baccalaureate degree. What is now needed is a similar guide directed at vocational and occupational training at the skilled technician level. Up until now the Office of Education has confined itself to giving moral support to the development of a new Council guide devoted to this purpose. Now we are at the point of committing funds to the project which would evaluate many programs that are not included in the present guide, about 12,000 courses in fact.

The third area of service education we have been discussing is the possibility of OE and NIE participating in the development of an increased number and a broader range of external degree programs by colleges and universities which would be specifically tailored to the needs and objectives of the career military person.

There are a few such programs in existence now, notably those of the New York State Regents and Florida International University. These and a few others have been established without Federal help, developed essentially by individual entrepreneurs working with the universities themselves. Now OE may join with the Department of Defense in developing a model external degree

program targeted on the serviceman or woman, a project that could well involve our developing thrust in postsecondary innovations since as an experimental approach to higher education, it falls within the purview of that program.

In our initial meetings with Dr. Brodsky, we discussed the possibility of including both the associate and the four-year degree in our preliminary sketch of the external degree program model. In any case, we do know that the eventual program will involve standard course work, correspondence, and some mechanism or apparatus to evaluate the educational content of the student's military activities. This type of approach clearly fits the emerging off-campus trend in higher education and seems to present extraordinary possibilities for performance-based credentialling that would be a far more reliable overall guide to a man's occupational competence than the traditional credit garnering routine. If an individual, for example, serves with the Department of the Army as an historical researcher, it is entirely conceivable that a period of, say, 10 years in such a position would be ample time for him to amass knowledge and competence in the field of history equivalent to the standard Ph.D. The external degree program could conceivably test that individual for knowledge and competence in the field of history, and award him certification commensurate with the results. Revolutionary as this sounds, it has great merit, and I predict that the performance-based credentialling system will take hold.

The key to an external degree program is protection of the serviceman and woman's progress toward a degree, particularly shielding them against the fatal interruptions associated with the many transfers that are normal to the military profession. We know that in the past a military person could well take credits at half a dozen universities and really end up with nothing, or at least with no degree or other credential cashable in civilian

life and emblematic of his personal progress because no one of those institutions would accept all the credits from the others. We envision a system whereby a soldier might enroll in the University of Florida, for example, to begin his studies. If later on he were transferred to Kentucky, he would simply pick up his work at the University of Kentucky, and so on, with all subsequent work there and at other institutions credited to his master transcript at Florida. The serviceman would not be penalized for the length of time it might take him to complete his degree work. However long --- 5, 10, 15 years perhaps --- the work would all be folded into his degree program so that all efforts would contribute to the final result --- the baccalaureate or whatever --- rather than tragically wasted as is so often the case now. The soldier cannot afford that kind of waste, and neither, for that matter, can the Army, the Defense Department, or the country, particularly within the framework of the new volunteer-force philosophy.

Certainly we can envision that a large part of any program of this kind would be carried on by junior and community colleges because these institutions right now are demonstrating their customary vigor and imagination in seeking to meet both the serviceman's and the veteran's educational needs. I cite in particular the Servicemen's Opportunity College concept developed and advanced by the Defense Department and the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges. This program now actively involves dozens of these two-year institutions across the country. The program requires that a participating institution have an admissions policy that is related to life conditions of the serviceman, eliminates barriers such as the residency requirement, and provides the special services to meet the serviceman's needs.

Central Texas College, located adjacent to Fort Hood, is an example of an aggressive, imaginative community college under the creative leadership of President Luis Morton. The college's programs reach out to meet the needs

of servicemen stationed in the vicinity. The college has trained literally thousands of men and women in Army technical and vocational programs and hundreds more in transition training, and now plans are being completed to expand the transition program at the Texas campus and establish new ones at seven troop locations in West Germany. All in all, Central Texas College is a good example, it seems to me, of an educational institution joining hands with the military to meet the needs of servicemen and women.

While promoting a variety of educational opportunities for servicemen, we are also working actively to protect him from degree mills and other unregulated academic enterprises. This is particularly critical now that the growing popularity of external degree programs has set educational endeavor free from a campus-based authority. We must guard against the possibility of abuse from profiteers who may offer fraudulent correspondence degree programs to the unsuspecting student.

Once again, the Federal Interagency Committee on Education has a task force devoted to Educational Consumer Protection, which is cooperating with the Education Commission of the States to develop model legislation for States to use in more adequately regulating postsecondary educational institutions. The Department of Defense is an active participant in the work of that task force.

Shifting gears at this point, I would also like to emphasize that the Office of Education is making a substantial effort to give a greater degree of coordination and stress to operation of our veterans' educational activities, particularly in light of the significant veterans-oriented measures embodied in the Education Amendments of 1972. A new Veterans Program Unit has been established within the Office of the Deputy Commissioner for Higher Education and has been given general overall responsibility for the administration of all relevant activities within OE. The major concern of this new administrative

unit at this time is to prepare for the administration of part of Title X of the Amendments, the Veterans Cost of Instruction Program. Appropriations for this provision were made in October at a level of $25 million for awarding of grants during the last half of the current academic year. Clearly an incentive program, it provides that a college or university can qualify for financial assistance if it increases the level of its veterans' enrollment by 10 percent over the preceding year. Those institutions whose proposals are funded will receive up to $300 for each veteran in full-time attendance, plus an additional $150 for each veteran classified as disadvantaged. An institution with a substantial veterans enrollment, and there are many, could obviously find this new law extremely advantageous.

The law provides that half of the money that comes to a college or university under this provision of Title X must be used to establish and staff an office of veterans affairs on campus. (The other half goes to the institution's general instructional program.) This office will --- must --- be an aggressive outfit, giving a new dimension to the concept of outreach. It will recruit veterans to the campus, shepherd them through the admissions and scheduling processes, and generally continue to look after their interests while they remain on campus.

In addition to the bustle involved in establishing the Title X program, the Veterans Affairs Unit in the Office of Education has been familiarizing itself with the new and more generous terms under which Federal student aid programs will channel aid to the veteran. Loans, grants, and work-study funds will be available to qualifying veterans. The new Basic Opportunity Grants program will be the most far-ranging student aid provision ever launched for potentially <u>all</u> postsecondary students.

To sum up, I would say that Federal education benefits are increasingly providing for veterans' needs as well as helping you lay the groundwork

for attracting the volunteer force.

I would add that my knowledge of the educational programs of the various armed services --- current and planned --- make this a particularly good time to be in the service. And I suspect that this good news will not be long in reaching young men and women throughout the country who need, and are actively looking for, just the sort of learning opportunities you offer --- and that the civilian sector really cannot match in many aspects.

All of which persuades me that the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines should have little trouble filling their quotas of volunteers. It is our intention that the Education Division of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare be of all assistance possible as the volunteer program develops. We pledge our resources to you professional companions engaged in common cause not only because we believe in the high goals of your volunteer force, but because we have great respect for your record as fellow teachers.

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